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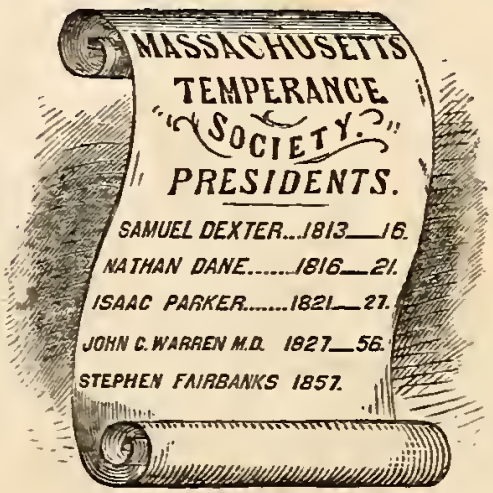

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No.....

J. Vine Hall.

The

Wonderful Escape.

A Brief Memoir.

BY NEWMAN HALL, LL.B.

MASSACHUSETTS TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.

BOSTON.

[1862]

THE substance of this Memoir was preached as a sermon at the Surrey Chapel, London, Sept. 30, 1860, on occasion of the decease of Mr. J. Vine Hall, an Elder of the church, by his son, Rev. Newman Hall, Rector of the church, the author of many valuable religious works well known in this country.

JOHN VINE HALL, a merchant of Maidstone, Kent, England, was the author of the celebrated tract called the "SINNER'S FRIEND," nearly two million copies of which have been circulated over the world in thirty languages, and which has been blessed to the spiritual good of thousands. His conversion was most remarkable. He had arrived at the age of over forty years before he was arrested in his sinful course; and from that time to the day of his death, which was in his eighty-seventh year, his devotion to the cause of Christ was almost unparalleled.

Upwards of 50,000 copies of the following brief Memoir of his life have already been circulated in England; and it is now put forth in this country with the prayer and humble hope that the divine blessing may still attend it, and give it success, not only in rescuing many from the thraldom of strong drink, but in awakening the careless and irreligious, and making them earnest workers in the cause of their Divine Master.

J. S. WARREN,

Secretary M. T. S.

BOSTON, May 1, 1861.

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1862.

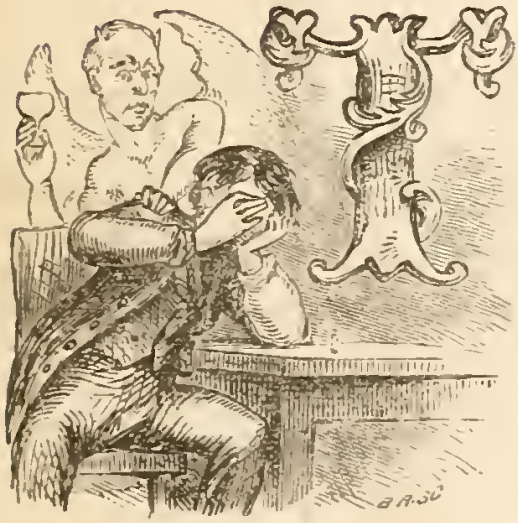
A Brief Memoir

OF

JOHN VINE HALL.

ZECH. iii. 2:

"IS NOT THIS A BRAND PLUCKED OUT OF THE FIRE?"



THESE words would not have formed the motto of the following narrative, had the selection been left to myself. They speak of present deliverance, but still more emphatically of previous peril. Salvation is suggested, but still more, — sin: life, but still more, — the death from which it has been rescued. Here is something in a state of

security. But whence came it? From the midst of the most terrible and destructive of elements, — *fire*. What is it? *A brand* — capable of being burnt; likely to be burnt; which actually did begin to burn; partly consumed — scorched and blackened by the flames. How came it from that fire? It was plucked out. No quiet, ordinary, general agency would suffice: there was the putting-forth of special effort, speed, violence, discrimination. "Is not this a *brand plucked* out of the *fire?*"

My personal knowledge of the subject of this narrative is not in harmony with these ideas. Throughout the forty years of my remembrance, I can associate his name only with "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report."

When I consider how upright and benevolent he was in his intercourse with men, how

diligent and devout as a worshipper of God, I might have selected as a text the character given of Zacharias, who "walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."

Musing on the progressive nature of his piety, — how year by year, from an elevation seldom attained, he rose yet higher and higher in heavenly-mindedness, reflecting more and more steadily and distinctly the image of his Lord, — I might have applied to him the words of Solomon: "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

The testimonies received during his illness respecting the spiritual good to others, of which God had made him the instrument both by his tongue and pen, might have led me to select the text: "They shall still bring forth fruit in old age."

The many years he had lived, the maturity of character he had attained, the long course of usefulness he had enjoyed, the respect and

affection with which he was regarded, might have found an illustration suggested by the season of the year: "Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season."

Or, contemplating how eminently devout he was; how at all seasons, in all places, by night and by day, he held communion with Heaven, "prayed without ceasing," and "blessed the Lord at all times," — I should have been justified in applying to him the description of Enoch: "He walked with God; and he was not, for God took him."

But the choice was not left with me. A few days before his departure, my father said solemnly, "Newman, if you preach a funeral sermon for me, your text must be, 'Is NOT THIS A BRAND PLUCKED FROM THE BURNING?'"

It was characteristic. While rejoicing in the pardoning love of God, he mourned over his own transgressions. Often quoting with delight the gracious promise, "Your sins and

iniquities will I remember no more," he remembered his sins himself with ever-new compunction. As he rose in admiration of his Saviour, he sank in his estimate of himself. If his branches shot upward, adorned with the flowers and the fruits of paradise, his roots grew downward with equal vigor ; and from the perennial, hidden springs of true repentance, drew the sap which gave strength, beauty, and fruitfulness to the tree.

In his little book, "The Sinner's Friend," and in his addresses at religious meetings, he urged his own example as a proof of what he was never weary of reiterating, — that the vilest of the vile may obtain pardon and eternal life through Him whose "blood cleanseth from all sin." In private conversation, he constantly spoke of himself in terms of self-loathing, which might appear extravagant to those who have known him only in his maturer years. His earlier life furnishes the explanation.

The prayer ever on his lips — "Remember

not the sins of my youth" — showed how those sins were present to his own mind. Not that he doubted their forgiveness; but his increasing sense of the love of God gave him an increasing sense of their heinousness. He could truly say, "My sin is ever before me." Seeing more clearly how deep was the gulf whence he was rescued, he felt more profoundly how vast was the debt he owed to his deliverer. The selection of this text was therefore in harmony with his prevailing state of mind: "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

It is no little effort for me to summon resolution to undertake this duty; but, even if he had not implied a desire that I should do so, I should have been unwilling to delegate to any other such an honor and privilege. It is the last service I can render him; and I shall endeavor faithfully to execute his own wishes. I shall not announce *his* text, and then preach a sermon from my own; but I shall apply the words he chose, in the sense

and with the personal application he designed. It would be easier, pleasanter, and, in the opinion of some, more respectful to his own memory, were I to leave undrawn the curtain concealing the evil he alone remembered, and exhibit only the good with which all who knew him were familiar. But the responsibility is not left with me. That curtain has been drawn aside by himself, not only in conversation, but in a speech which has been printed and widely circulated both in England and America. Besides, were I to ignore the facts, I should not be acting as a faithful executor of his will. In giving me this text, he undoubtedly meant that I should speak of him as an example of what Bunyan calls "grace abounding to the chief of sinners;" and this I shall do, in a spirit of filial reverence for a father's dying request, and with prayer for the fulfilment of his earnest desire, that thereby all other sinners may be encouraged to trust in the Saviour, and that the God of love may be glorified.

Mr. John Vine Hall was born March 14, 1774. When a young man, at Maidstone, his business pursuits placed him in circumstances of great temptation. He was lively, amiable, generous, a genial companion, enjoying a sprightly joke, and singing a merry song. His society was therefore much sought after. Social enjoyments were invariably connected with the free use of intoxicating beverages. He thus was led astray, and "erred through strong drink."

Often has he told me with tears how he became a ringleader among the dissipated young men of the neighborhood. Those whose habits are at variance with the will of God try to persuade themselves that the Bible is a cunningly devised fable. It was so with him. He frequented discussion-meetings, at which infidel opinions were advocated, and where Christianity was ridiculed. From walking "in the counsel of the ungodly," he stood "in the way of sinners," and then "sat

down in the seat of the scornful." The "Age of Reason" became his favorite study, and he frequently carried it in his pocket.

The day previous to the accident which resulted in his death, he told me, with much emotion, how he was delivered from infidelity. A friend lent him Bishop Porteus' "Evidences of Christianity." Its arguments convinced him. He had no wish really to embrace religion, and alter his course of life; but he felt indignant at having been deceived. Therefore, pulling the "Age of Reason" from his pocket, he opened it, and thrust it into the fire with the poker, saying, "*Tom Paine, you've cheated me. You're a liar! Go to the flames!*"

But his heart was not yet changed. A few years after, through attending the preaching of a Wesleyan minister at Worcester, he became convinced of the necessity of a change of heart, and attended a "class-meeting." He was undoubtedly sincere in his profession of religion. His diary exhibits heartfelt grief for

sin, and earnest yearnings after holiness. Yet he fell again into those habits, which, at the time of his marriage, it was hoped he had conquered. Now occurred the providential escape which he mentioned at the anniversary of the Temperance Society, in Exeter Hall, on May 17, 1836; and at a meeting of the Norwich City Mission, in 1839: —

"In the town where I reside (said the speaker) were twelve young men, who were accustomed, early in life, to meet together for indulgence in drinking and all manner of excess. In the course of time, some of them engaged in business; but their habits of sin were so intwined with their very existence, that they became bankrupts. Eight of them died under the age of forty, without a hope beyond the grave. Three others were reduced to the most abject poverty. Two of these had formerly moved in very respectable circles; but they are now in the most miserable state of poverty, wretchedness, and disgrace.

"One more, the *last* of the twelve, the *worst of all*, remains to be accounted for. He was a sort of *ringleader*, taking the head of the table at convivial parties, and *sitting up whole nights*, drinking, and inducing others to do the same, — never going to bed sober. He was an infidel, a disciple of Tom Paine both in principle and practice, a blasphemer of the word of God; yet a good-natured man, and would do anybody a kindness. At length, he went to reside at a distance, where, for a time, he refrained from dissipation, was married, and every thing seemed prosperous around him; but instead of being thankful to God for his mercy, and watching against his besetting sin, he gave way to his old propensity, and brought misery to his family and friends, many of whom loved him dearly, because in his sober moments he was disposed to do good to every creature within his reach.

"One dark night, being in the neighborhood of Stourbridge, he had been *drinking to*

excess; and in a state of intoxication he wandered out of the house, and *staggered amongst the coal-pits*, which are in many places left open and exposed. These he passed in safety; but the road he took went over a canal: he missed the bridge, and *rolled over the bank to the edge of the water*. And here he seemed to have arrived at the end of his wicked course; but God, who is rich in mercy, had *caused a stone to lie directly in his path*, and thus spared him in this, the apparently last hour of his mortal existence. *One turn more*, and he would have sunk into eternal ruin, and his disembodied spirit been ushered into the presence of the Judge of all. The arm of Mercy, however, interposed. His senses returned for a moment. He saw the water beneath him. He crawled back again into the road. There he was picked up, and lodged in a public-house for the night.

"This miraculous escape, it might have been thought, would have made a deep and lasting impression on his mind. But no; it

was viewed simply as a lucky escape: and he continued to pursue his career of sin as ardently as before."

In spite of his better judgment, the injury to his worldly interests, his desire to be esteemed by his friends, his ardent affection for his wife, together with his religious convictions, he frequently felt his old habit taking possession of him with demon-power. There were then no Total-Abstinence societies, which might shield him with their sympathy and example. When every one drank, was it to be expected he would abstain? The advice generally given was, "Use, but not abuse." Yet in his case the use was ever urging to the abuse. With his peculiar temperament and habits, one glass would so rouse his appetite, that self-control was gone; and he rushed forward to the abyss which, when perfectly sober, he abhorred.

One of these sad relapses occurred on occasion of a young minister visiting the house,

and taking brandy and water at luncheon. My father, thinking there could be no harm in following such an example, filled his own glass, and was again overcome. While I mention this, I am reminded of a man who appealed to me a few years ago for succor. He told me he was once a respected and popular minister; but that, coming to London, his first evening was spent in the company of several other ministers, whose "moderate" indulgence in wine and spirits led him to habits of tippling, which ended in ministerial ruin and beggary. I also know of a similar case in Yorkshire. A young man had been reclaimed from drunkenness by means of "total abstinence." A minister, coming to visit at the house, persuaded him to join in a glass of wine, saying that the entire disuse was going to an extreme, and a neglect of a "good creature of God." The young man, whom similar persuasion from a person less respected would not have influenced, fell into the snare unintentionally laid

for him. That one glass awoke the slumbering fiend. He rushed out to the public-house, whence he was brought home intoxicated, and from that time was again the wretched slave of strong drink. Similar cases abound. Can any one, in the face of such facts, condemn or deride those, who, not needing entire abstinence themselves, renounce all indulgence in intoxicating drinks for the sake of those, who, humanly speaking, if they are not to drink wine to excess, must not drink it at all?

The subject of this narrative for a short time only triumphed over his old enemy. Entering into company, and responding generously to the greeting of his friends, a single glass would sometimes destroy all his good resolutions; but earnest prayers were daily offered for him by one who was indeed his guardian angel. As an encouragement to intercede for others, it may be mentioned, *that on one particular day there was special importunity*, — even that he, whose life and love

were dearer than all the world, might die at once a penitent, rather than live on in sin. How great must have been the delight occasioned by finding him an hour after in tears, exclaiming, "I have heard as if it was a voice from heaven, saying, 'If thou forsakest thy sin, thou shalt be forgiven'"!

He thus referred to this circumstance in the speech already quoted: "After an indulgence in drinking for some days, having come to his senses, he began to reason with himself upon his guilt and folly, surrounded with blessings, yet abusing the whole; and in an angry, passionate manner, he muttered, 'Oh! it's no use for me to repent: my sins are too great to be forgiven.' He had no sooner uttered these words than a voice seemed to say, with strong emphasis,—

"'IF THOU WILT FORSAKE THY SINS, THEY SHALL BE FORGIVEN.'

"The poor man started at what he believed to be a real sound, and hastily turned round;

but, seeing no one, he said to himself, 'Surely I have been drinking till I am going mad.' He stood paralyzed, not knowing what to think, till relieved by a flood of tears; and then exclaimed, 'Surely this is the voice of Mercy once more calling me to repentance.' He fell on his knees, and, half suffocated by his feelings, cried out, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner!' The poor wretch was broken-hearted: and now his besetting sin appeared more horrible than ever; but *it must be conquered, or he must perish.* Then commenced a contest more terrible than that of conflicting armies; than Waterloo, or all other battles whatever. The soul was at stake. An impetuous torrent was to be turned into an opposite course. He now began to search the Bible, which he had once despised. Here he saw that crimson and scarlet sins could be blotted out, and made white as snow; that the grace of God was all-sufficient. He refrained from intemperance, commenced family prayer, and hope again revived; but his

deadly foe still pursued him, and he was again overcome.

"Now his disgrace and sinfulness appeared worse than ever; and, with melancholy feeling, he cried out in anguish of spirit, that he was *doomed to eternal misery*, and it was useless to try to avert his fate. His cruel enemy took this opportunity to suggest to his mind, that he had so disgraced himself, that it would be better to get rid of his life at once, — frequently the end of drunkards. The razor was in his hand; but the Spirit of the Lord interposed, and the weapon fell to the ground. Still his enemy pursued him, and seemed to have new power over his sin of intemperance. He would sometimes refrain for days and weeks, and then again he was as bad as ever. Hope seemed now to be lost, and especially when, one day, after having been brought into great weakness through intemperance, death appeared to be very near, and his awful state more terrific than ever. Not a moment was to be lost. He cast himself

once more at the footstool of his long-insulted Creator, and, with an intensity of agony, cried out, 'What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? Shall it declare thy truth? Hear, O Lord! and have mercy upon me: Lord, be thou my helper.' He sank down exhausted: he could say no more. *That prayer was* HEARD; and a voice from heaven seemed to reply, 'I WILL *help thee.* I have seen thy struggles; and I will now say to thine enemy, Hitherto thou hast come, but *no further.*'

"A physician was consulted as to the probability or possibility of medicine being rendered effectual to stop the disposition to intemperance. The poor man *would have suffered the amputation of all his limbs*, could so severe a method have rid him of his deadly habit, which, like a vulture, had fastened upon his very vitals. The physician boldly declared, that, if this poor slave would strictly adhere to his prescription, not only the

practice, but the very inclination for strong drink would subside in a few months. Oh! *could you have seen the countenance of that poor man when the physician told him of this*, — hope and fear alternately rising up, — whilst he grasped the physician's arm, and said, 'O sir! be careful how you open that door of hope; for, should it be closed upon me, I am lost for ever!' The physician pledged his credit, that, if his prescription was punctually followed, the happiest results would ensue. The remedy was a preparation of steel; and eagerly did the poor slave begin to devour the antidote to his misery. EVERY BOTTLE WAS TAKEN WITH EARNEST PRAYER to God for his blessing to accompany it. He commenced taking his medicine on the first week in March, 1816, and continued till the latter end of September following; and to the honor and glory of the Lord God Almighty, who sent his angel to whisper in the poor man's ear, 'I will help thee,' — for the glory of God be it spoken, that from the latter end

of September, 1816, to the present hour, *not so much as a spoonful of spirituous liquor, or wine of any description, has ever passed the surface of that man's tongue.*

"The narrative which I have thus detailed might appear almost as a fable, a tale, got up for effect; but every syllable is *truth:* and, to the glory and honor of the Lord God Almighty, the man who has been so marvellously delivered is now in perfect health, the happy servant of the Lord Jesus Christ; and he who has been plucked as a brand from the burning, and delivered from the power of Satan, NOW STANDS BEFORE YOU; and it is from HIS lips that you have heard the goodness of that God whose mercy endureth for EVER!!!"

As application has often been made for the prescription referred to, it is here given, simply as a record, that, in this particular case, it was the remedy which, by the blessing of God, was associated with the cure:—

Sulphate of iron, five grains; magnesia, ten grains; peppermint-water, eleven drachms; spirit of nutmeg, one drachm; — twice a day.

In a private box, opened after his decease, a small parcel was found, on which was written, "The mercy of God unspeakable to J. V. H." It contained a phial bottle, in which was a little sediment; a newspaper-report of the speech above quoted; and the following affecting document: "This phial is one (of upwards of three hundred) of those out of which J. V. H. drank a preparation of steel, in the year 1816. It is preserved, like the pot of manna, to show the way in which the Lord delivered his servant out of the wilderness, — out of an horrible pit, — out of his besetting sin. Oh, praised be the Lord! This medicine was persevered in from March 2, 1816, till about the end of September following, — about seven months; and from Sept. 19, 1816, till Nov. 22, 1836 (the present day of making this memorandum), not a drop of wine or

spirituous liquor has ever passed the surface of the tongue of J. V. H.; and, for the last *eighteen* years, nothing stronger than tea, coffee, or milk, has ever entered his stomach. 'Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness!'—J. V. H."

These memorials I have just seen and handled. Sacred relics they are of a dreadful conflict and wonderful deliverance. Bending over them, my brother and myself vowed, by the help of God, more fervently than ever to wage war against those pernicious drinking customs which annually destroy so many thousands of precious souls, and to which our honored father so nearly fell a victim.

The case here described shows that there may be the true commencement of a divine life in the soul, although old sins may frequently re-assert their power. We must not hastily discard as insincere those who, while professing repentance, fall again into the snare of the Devil. Through many years, divine grace and an easily besetting sin strove

for the mastery; but at length he was enabled to say, "Thanks be to God, who hath given me the victory."

It may be questioned whether simple abstinence would not have been equally effectual without any medicine. When this prescription was first taken, wine and spirits were given up; *but it was found that beer was sufficient to excite the morbid propensity. After several failures from this cause, beer also was relinquished. Then it was, and not till then, that the cure was complete. From the day that* ALL *intoxicating beverages were renounced, the old temptation was powerless: the very inclination to excess ceased to be felt.* Till his death (forty-two years), not a drop of intoxicating liquor ever passed his tongue. He lost all desire for it: the taste, the smell, became, physically as well as morally, hateful.

It was not, therefore, surprising that he should love the Temperance cause. He often advocated it in public, and occasion-

ally assisted at the meetings of the Surrey-chapel Band of Hope. He was advertised to preside at the monthly meeting of last June; though the occurrence of the accident which led to his decease prevented his fulfilling the engagement. On these occasions, while urging the use of appropriate means to avoid or overcome sin, he invariably spoke of the grace of God as the only sure preservative, and urged his hearers to offer constant and earnest prayer for that divine help, without which, "when the enemy cometh in like a flood," no resolution formed in our own strength is to be relied on.

It can easily be understood how great was his pleasure that two of his sons should first adopt, and then publicly advocate in connection with their gospel ministry, that principle of Total Abstinence to which he owed so much. Nor is it surprising that those sons should be resolved, with increasing earnestness, to promote this greatest philanthropic enterprise of our day; stimulated,

instead of being disheartened, by the general indifference and the occasional contempt or hostility which it has to encounter.

The following questions are respectfully suggested: —

In this case, was not entire abstinence necessary?

Would it have been wise and kind for others, in his presence, to advocate the moderate use of wine?

Was not abstinence on their part, for his sake, better than indulgence?

Are not multitudes exactly in the state in which he was?

Is not total abstinence necessary for them now?

Is not abstinence wise and kind, on the part of others, for their sake?

Is it not well to say, with St. Paul, "It is good not to drink wine nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, is offended, or made weak"?

From the time referred to, the subject of this narrative "grew in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ." So great was the change, that some of his former associates reported he had gone mad. He often said he wished that he could bite them, if this would inoculate them with his disease, and render them mad too. But those who did not sympathize with his piety could not but admire his character. He walked blamelessly before the world. In business, he was a model of punctuality and integrity. His word was his bond. Generous as well as just, he was ever ready to help the needy. He could not refrain from acts of kindness which were within his power. He could never be persuaded that it was an evil thing to relieve street-beggars. He thought it was better to be sometimes deceived, than run the risk of refusing help to the really necessitous. It was impossible for him to say or do any thing unjust, untrue, ungenerous, unkind. Every one had in him a friend. He

would not even speak of others in disparaging terms; on their excellences only would he comment: and seldom allowed censorious allusions to be made in his hearing, without a gentle reproof. In a town where every one knew him, his name was without reproach.

I only remember one infirmity in him,—hastiness of temper. But this failing, in the occasions of its manifestation, generally "leant to virtue's side." Yet it was a defect, and one which he perseveringly strove to overcome. I have often, in my youth, witnessed the struggle, and wondered at the victories he gained. Sometimes I have seen him, when unable to control his feelings, quietly leave the room. At length, he completely mastered the infirmity; and for many years it might be supposed, by those who had not known him in earlier life, that he was naturally most meek.

The secret of his holy living was the closeness of his communion with God. He

was eminently a man of prayer. They who have heard him in devotional meetings must have been struck with his fervor. It was so also at the family altar. But not only at appointed seasons did he approach the throne of grace: he offered special prayer in connection with every thing he did. He "prayed without ceasing." Walking, riding, in the intervals of business, in society, he "continued instant in prayer." Rowland Hill once said he liked ejaculatory prayer, "*because it went up to God before the Devil could get a shot at it.*" Many were the petitions throughout both the day and the night which thus flew heavenward.

Yes, through the night. Again and again have I heard him say that he had enjoyed delightful dreams; for that he was all night, in imagination, at the prayer-meeting, offering supplication and thanksgiving to God. So habitually did his thoughts run in this channel during his waking hours, that, when the controlling will was dormant, they un-

consciously flowed on in the same direction. On retiring to rest, he constantly asked that this might be the case; and frequently has he gratefully referred to the way in which that prayer has been answered.

He was diligent in searching the Scriptures. Here he learnt what to pray for, what promises to plead, what answers to expect. Here he listened to the voice of God, and sharpened that sword of the Spirit, wherewith, after the example of the Captain of his salvation, he repelled the assaults of the Wicked One. I remember, when a child, often running for a kiss into the room where he spent an early hour every morning, engaged in private devotion. I still seem to see him with "Scott's Bible" open before him. He read this commentary entirely through several times. His copy, in three quarto volumes, is full of his own pencil-notes. On the fly-leaf at the end of the third volume are the following memoranda:—

Finished the first reading, Sept. 6, 1817.

Finished the second reading, Aug. 10, 1820. Thanks be to God for an increasing desire to study his Holy Word *to the end of my life!* — J. V. H.

Finished the third reading, Dec. 20, 1822; and, through the goodness of Almighty God, began this volume again the next day.

Finished the fourth attentive study of this book, March 21, 1824; and I desire to thank God that my faith in the Lord Jesus has been greatly increased. In him is all my hope and expectation of living for ever in glory. May this be the happy experience of all my children, and my very dear, affectionate wife! — J. V. H., March 21, 1824.

Began the fifth reading, Sept. 23, 1828; praising God for preserving within me a spiritual appetite, and with continual hungering and thirsting after heavenly knowledge. Praised be God for sparing my *life* so many years! Blessed be his holy name for preserving my *soul* amid so many dangers, and still keeping alive within me a heavenly appetite! Oh, may this *unearthly* desire increase with every breath, till "Holiness to the Lord" be written on my forehead, and be found in the centre of my heart! — J. V. H., Aug. 19, 1830.

Finished the sixth time of reading, May 29, 1832; and next day began the plain New Testament again, with increased appetite for the food of heaven.

March 24, 1836. — Have now read the Gospels and most of the other parts twenty-three times. Appetite increasing, glory to God!

Finished the seventh reading, July 5, 1850.

Of late years, he confined himself to a Bible with only marginal references. This was

his constant companion, — almost his only book. On the first leaf is this inscription : —

"My heart burns with holy gratitude to the Lord for his wondrous mercy to my soul, in having plucked me as a brand from the burning, and preserved me as a total abstainer from all intoxicating drink from the latter end of the year 1816 until the present day, — Nov. 4, 1856. Praised be the Lord! Oh, how lovely is the Lord Jesus to my heart, where he has been, and is, a welcome inmate *forty* years! — J. V. H."

Many portions he committed to memory, and the frequent underlinings of favorite texts are an index to the state of his mind. The following will serve as illustrations; the words in Italics being strongly, sometimes doubly and trebly, scored : —

He delivered me from my strong enemy. — J. V. H.

He brought me forth into a large place; he *delivered me.* — J. V. H.

I am as a *wonder* unto many; *greatest* wonder to *myself.* — J. V. H.

He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established *my* goings; and he hath put a *new* song into *my* mouth. — J. V. H.

The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if, by reason of strength, they be *fourscore years*, yet is their

strength *labor and sorrow.* (Not so with J. V. H., eighty-five! Praise the Lord!)

O Lord! truly I am thy servant: I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid. Thou hast *loosed my bonds.* — J. V. H.

I am thine: save me. I have remembered thy name, O Lord! *in the night.* At *midnight* I will rise to give thanks unto thee, because of thy righteous judgments. *Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.*

Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the *snare* of the fowlers: the snare is *broken*, and *we* are escaped. — J. V. H.

I say the truth in Christ, that I have great heaviness and *continual sorrow in my heart.* (So have I on account of sin. — J. V. H.)

But, *where sin abounded, grace did much more abound* (!!!! even to *me.* — J. V. H.)

And *such were some of you;* but ye are washed, but ye are *sanctified*, but ye are *justified* in the *name of the Lord Jesus*, and by the Spirit of our God. (Boundless mercy!!!)

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, *of whom I am chief.* (J. V. H. chief*est.*)

Whatsoever we ask, we know that we *have* the petitions we desired of him. (A penitent, believing heart.)

His religion was ardent. There was no fanaticism in it; but there was much holy enthusiasm. Is this censured in the votaries of art; in those who prosecute useful inventions and discoveries; who battle against despotism, and sacrifice their lives on the altar

of their country's freedom? I never knew any one more enthusiastic in regard to "things seen and temporal" than was he in reference to "things unseen and eternal." "Out of the abundance of his heart his mouth spake." I have often seen him in the hurry of business, when any other interruption would have been forbidden, promptly lay down his pen, and for a few minutes enter into religious conversation with as much fervor as though he had just risen from his knees in the secret place of prayer, instead of having been engaged, a moment before, in the most thorough attention to his secular duties. I have heard him compare his feelings to a bottle containing oil and water: shake it, and the particles intermingle; let it be at rest one moment, and the oil mounts to the top. Truly he was "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

He seldom concerned himself with the mysteries of religion; but, avoiding the sharp prickles which guard their honey, he gathered

sweetness only from the plain sayings of God. He did not care for systems. He would have found it difficult clearly to define the great doctrines on which his heart so habitually fed. But he had what was far better, — an intense, passionate affection towards a personal, living, ever-present Christ. The Jesus of the Gospels; the Man of sorrows; the holy, compassionate, condescending Friend of sinners; He who died as a sacrifice, and then ascended to intercede for transgressors, — this Jesus was to him a living reality, a constant presence.

"*Why do you believe in Christ?*" was a question once asked him by a philosophical sceptic. He replied, "I have an argument you cannot answer. I believe in him because I feel him in my heart: he is here!" Thus he loved the Saviour's cause, and delighted to promote it. His house became a home for ministers, who were entertained with generous hospitality, as the greatest privilege and honor to those who offered it. Little did

they think how amply these services of love would be recompensed in kind to two of their own sons.

Loving Christ supremely, he loved all the friends of Christ. I have often heard him say, "I care nothing for sects, isms, and parties: let a man hate sin, and love Christ, and he is my brother, to whatever sect he may belong." He would have thought his ecclesiastical views erroneous, had they chilled his affection towards any fellow-Christians, or interfered with his expression of it. He often said that Christianity was a freemasonry, the members of which, of different ranks and nations, knew the signs, and felt as brothers. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

No pressure of business kept him from the week-night prayer-meeting or the week-night lecture. Whoever else was absent, his minister might rely on him. His motto was, GOD FIRST, BUSINESS NEXT, PLEASURE LAST.

The decision of character manifested in early life distinguished his Christianity. When once convinced of duty, he cared nothing for difficulties. For example: He was the proprietor of a newspaper, one of the oldest and most widely circulated in the county of Kent. For many years, it had been customary for the men to work half the day on Sunday. He sent for the foreman, and said this must be discontinued. The foreman replied, that the paper could not be published in time, and that the men would strike. "Then tell them, after an hour's consideration, to come for their wages, and I will find others." From that day, not a stroke of work was done there on Sunday.

He was appointed, in 1834, one of the deacons of the church then under the charge of the Rev. E. Jinkings; and zealously performed the duties of his office until his removal to London, when he was appointed an elder of Surrey Chapel. During a total period of nearly twenty-six years, he illustrated

the words of St. Paul: "They that have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."

At Maidstone, for a long period, he regularly visited the prison and the workhouse, where he read and expounded the Scriptures. He occasionally conducted the week-evening services; and in London, until his last illness, he frequently took part in the devotional meetings of the church. His fervent prayers and exhortations will not soon be forgotten. But his chief labors were with individuals. No suitable opportunity was ever neglected. It was his daily prayer, that he might bear some witness for Christ. When travelling, he would invariably introduce religious conversation, in so earnest yet so courteous a manner as seldom to give offence, and so as most generally to secure respectful attention from all descriptions of people.

I well remember, on a voyage to Hull, how the passengers listened to his earnest appeals.

Beginning with one, he gained the attention of all, until the saloon became a church. He was a constant visitor of the sick and dying. When his coats were brushed and laid aside, copies of the "Sinner's Friend" and "Come to Jesus," with pence folded up ready for distribution, were found in the pockets of each. He never went out of the door, unprovided with the ammunition of love. His pen, also, was ever busy; and within a few weeks of his decease he wrote to persons in whom he felt an interest, urging them to seek the Lord. All his letters, except those of a merely business character, contained some holy counsel or devout sentiment. It is easy to be "instant in season" to speak for Christ on public occasions, when asked or expected to do so; but the difficulty is to do so "out of season." How many opportunities of doing good are lost by those who confine their testimony to meetings convened for the purpose of hearing it!

But the most important work of his life

was the publication of the "Sinner's Friend." He delighted in daily perusing "Bogatzky's Golden Treasury." One morning the thought occurred, that what was so profitable to him might be so to others who could not afford to purchase the book: so he resolved to extract some of his favorite portions, and print them in a tract for gratuitous distribution. To this he wrote an introduction. with the well-known address, — "Sinner. this little book is for you." Two thousand were printed, and given away. Applications poured in, and another edition was issued. Pious friends then insisted that they should bear part of the expense. Thus the tract became public, and soon acquired a very large circulation. One by one, he withdrew the passages from Bogatzky, and inserted others of his own, until the entire tract, with the exception of "*a word to the poor*," could claim him as the author.

Edition followed edition. Translations of it were made into nearly thirty languages.

The English Tract Society adopted it, and that of America. Nearly two millions of copies are now in circulation. Its usefulness has been unprecedented. For many years, and from all quarters, testimony to this effect was poured on its author. Rich and poor, learned and ignorant, have alike, through its instrumentality, been led to Christ. Hundreds of most interesting cases came to his knowledge, and numberless letters have been written by him to persons seeking spiritual advice and consolation from him as the author.

What is the secret of its power? Its directness; its plainness of speech; its exaltation of Christ; its obvious earnestness and sincerity; its intense love for the souls of men. But other books have had such features without such success. The true secret is the earnest prayer with which every edition was printed, every copy circulated. Its author, from the first, sought the Lord's help, and consecrated the book to him.

Since his decease, a copy of the French edition has been found among his papers, on which he had written, "Dedicated July 15, 1839." It may be inferred, that, by a special act of devotion, he consecrated to God every new version of his book; and that, in whatever language it is read, the prayers of the writer are bringing down heavenly influences on the perusal of it. He was recently reminded how often we had seen copies of the book stuck in hedges, with the first page open, to attract the attention of any one who might pass along. "*Yes*," said he; "*and every copy was stuck there with a prayer.*"

The influence of his holy life combined with all his direct efforts to persuade others to holiness. It was evident that he himself believed and practised what he spoke of. He was, indeed, a "living epistle of Christ, known and read of all men." His son, now a minister near Halifax, has often testified, that when he was mixed up with sceptical companions, and on the very verge of infi-

delity, it was the holy consistency of his parents which alone preserved him. One reason for Christianity after another had been relinquished, one cable after another had broken; and he would have drifted rapidly to destruction, but for this anchor which still held firm: "Whatever others may be, I know that my father and mother are sincere. Their holy lives persuade me there must be something in religion, after all."

The writer well remembers that this was the chief instrumentality in his own conversion. I always knew that the most earnest desire of our parents was that we should be decided Christians. At the age of sixteen, I became a member of the church; but, long before then, I often earnestly desired to feel all that is meant by the "new birth," if only to give my father and mother the greatest joy which it could ever be in my power to confer.

Why do I thus speak of my father? Not

to extol *him*, but to magnify the grace of God in him. I have shown what he was in earlier life: I have most feebly endeavored to indicate what he became afterwards. He was once a brand in the fire: he was plucked out by the special mercy of the Friend of sinners. He became a temple of the Holy Ghost, — a king and a priest unto God. To God alone he ascribed all the praise. To the end of life he mourned over himself, lying in the very dust of humiliation, while "his spirit rejoiced in God his Saviour." Whenever he spoke of himself, it was only to "magnify the Lord;" saying with the apostle, "By the grace of God, I am what I am."

But I must hasten to the closing scenes of his life. On May 22 last, we had a family excursion to the top of Leith Hill. Walking on the breezy downs, he declined my arm, showing me how firmly and quickly he could march in his eighty-seventh year; and imitated the gait of a soldier, having been a

volunteer at the time of the first French Revolution. We boiled our kettle and enjoyed our picnic as we gazed on the lovely and extensive landscape. On our return, we stopped to rest the horses, and alighted.

He always felt so well and strong, that he was unconscious of the inevitable diminution of physical power attending fourscore years, and would not admit the danger to which his advanced age exposed him. He drove his pony-carriage himself until his eighty-fourth year, when he even went into Regent Street in the hour of greatest bustle. He would often go into the city alone to transact business, walking part of the way, and taking omnibuses, contrary to the expostulations of those who knew the peril; but, conscious of no weakness, he did not like to be treated as if infirm. We always feared some accident. It occurred this day.

When our backs were turned, he endeavored to regain his seat in the excursion-van. The horses moved a little forward just as his

foot was on the steps; which fell, and he was thrown backward. We were at once round him. He said he was not much hurt, and resumed his seat; but his leg was badly bruised. For some time he progressed favorably, his health being unimpaired. A slight operation was followed by erysipelas; and this, combined with an attack of congestion of the lungs, threatened to terminate his life within a few hours. The doctors recommended wine. My mother at once said the proposal was useless. Then it was suggested that beer might be less objectionable. My father, who had been lying in a state of great weakness, apparently unaware of what was said, emphatically groaned out, "*Never, never!*"

Was he not right? Years ago, he was ill of typhus-fever. Wine was proposed as essential. "I would rather die!" said he. In both cases, regarded only in the light of science, the advice may have been judicious. Still, on the authority of my revered and

eminently skilful father-in-law, Dr. Gordon, I declare my conviction, that far more patients are killed than saved by the administration of wine and spirits. Even where such stimulants may be useful, there are cases where their employment would be worse than death. Many a reclaimed drunkard has had his old thirst for alcohol revived by such "medicine;" and, though he has recovered bodily, he has relapsed morally. Yes, than this, or the danger of it, better to die!

But my father did not die in the typhus-fever; nor did he die during this attack, when wine was thought essential, and when only twenty-four hours were given as the limit of life. To the astonishment of doctors, nurses, of us all, he rallied so as to leave his bed, and go out in a bath-chair. He came down stairs to dinner on Sunday, Aug. 5; and, the next day, was preparing to go to Brighton. But signs of abscess appeared, and he again took to his bed.

It has long been his habit to keep a daily record of his feelings and passing events. This is clearly written in sixteen quarto volumes, — an autobiography of peculiar interest, extending over a period of about fifty years. When he went from home, he took with him a small memorandum-book, in which he made rough notes for transcription on his return. The last he had for this purpose he continued to use during his illness, waiting till he might be well enough to write up his journal in the distinct manner which distinguishes the whole of it. I make the following extracts from his last memoranda : —

May 21, 1860. — To Chilworth. After dinner, about twenty-six children assembled in the drawing-room; where dear N. read the 103d Psalm, and then baptized M.'s young child by the name of L. The children then sang several hymns: then A. gave an address most suitable. The children then departed, receiving an orange and a piece of cake, — a deeply interesting service, for which my Mary and self praised the Lord.

May 22. — N.'s birthday. Most lovely morning; nightingales singing whilst I lay in bed. We all went to Leith Hill in open van. A fall, — ladder gave way with myself, by which I was precipitated to the ground, with a severe bruise on my right leg.

Mercy that no bone broken nor hurt on my back; but pain very severe. Praise the Lord!

May 23. — Resolved to return home.

May 26. — My leg less painful, but the bruise black all round. Praise the Lord, my bodily health, except that terrible bruise, is most perfectly good. I mourn on account of sin, — sin ever before me; but I pray the Lord, almost hourly, to forgive my sins, and give me faith in the blood shed on Calvary for the whole world.

June 3. — The large-print Testament and Psalms presented by dear Christians . . . very useful to me at present time. They are my daily companions praising God. My beloved wife, also, so tender, loving, kind! Praise God for such a wife!

June 8. — On my bed. New Testament and Psalms such great comfort to my soul! They cheer my heart.

June 25. — My beloved Mary so active, so kind, full of health! Praise the Lord!

This was his last memorandum. It is followed by some pencil-markings quite illegible, — a vain attempt to write. The above extracts show the state of his mind to the last, — his ardent human affection, his deep contrition, his devout spirit, his habitual thankfulness for every mercy. How true of him were the words of the Psalmist! — "I will bless the Lord at *all* times: his praise shall *continually* be in my lips."

It was my great privilege to be with him very much during his illness. I was reminded of the similar honor and happiness I enjoyed in the case of my dear friend and father-in-law, Dr. Gordon. We often spoke of the visit paid to him by my parents just before his decease, of the delight it gave him, of their strong attachment to one another, of the rapid and wonderful development of Christian life, and the triumphant departure we then witnessed; and how that glorified saint, now during eleven years "grown familiar with the skies," would be waiting to welcome the aged pilgrim, who, having long and perseveringly prayed for him, and often affectionately spoken to him of the Friend of sinners, had now been outstripped by him in the journey.

For a short time, the enemy strove to darken his mind with doubts as to his acceptance with God, and his own security. I told him I could not remember the time when he was not habitually in a religious frame of mind,

walking with God. "Ah! but at a great distance." Then, after a pause: "But he has plucked my feet out of the net, and established my goings." — "What would be your answer, if Christ were now to say, '*Lovest thou me?*'" He replied fervently, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." I read the following words of Rowland Hill on his death-bed: "Modest words before God become us best: strong expressions of personal interest may do for some, but not for all. I can see more of the Saviour's glory than of my interest in him. God is letting me down gently into the grave, and I shall creep into heaven through some crevice of the door. I have no rapturous joys, but peace, a good hope through grace, — all through grace." He replied, "Yes: I've peace, — I hope."

He said on different occasions, "If this should carry me off, I've nothing to fear, nothing to ask for. This is not the experience of an hour or a day or a month, but of forty years." — "I've been travelling to that

home many years. To think of laying down this shabby tabernacle, and having one all of white! — nothing to soil it; without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. No, nothing shall separate from the love of Christ." I said, "What a difference between what we were and what we shall be!" He responded, "Yes, and what we *are!*" — "All things are overruled, — this accident to bring me nearer to Christ, and, it may be, to bring me home." "You'll kiss this hand when I shan't feel it." "But we shall meet again." — "Yes: we're on the same road, — glory, glory, glory!" — "I've no rapturous joy; but I've a humble dependence on the Lord Jesus Christ."

Reminding him of our motto for the year, — "Redeemed with the precious blood of Christ," — he said, "I have prayed every day, for many years, that he would come and take possession of the heart he purchased with his blood." I referred to his having been always ready to speak of Christ. "Because the subject was always nearest my heart."

It was said that many who had been led to heaven by the "Sinner's Friend" were waiting to give him a triumphal entry. "Oh! if I can but crawl in on my hands and knees, I shall be very well satisfied." — "'Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner!' this is my prayer every day, many times a day." — "I so grieve that I have so little grief for my sins! I've been a great sinner, and I need a great Saviour." On Sunday morning he said to me, "Preach about Christ and his salvation: I've proved it. It's not less valuable after forty years! Better than ever: I've proved it."

His thankfulness of spirit was continually exhibited. He regretted giving what he called so much trouble to those who felt it the greatest privilege to minister to him. One day, while being fed, he lifted up his hand. When asked if it was a sign that he declined any more, he answered, "To praise God." I read a letter to him from a lady, who spoke of the usefulness of the

Portuguese edition of the "Sinner's Friend." He lifted his hands solemnly, saying, "Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, praise the Lord!" Hearing of some instances of usefulness, he said, "Praise the Lord! he makes me to bring forth fruit in old age." — "How wonderful that I should make known Christ! There was a good woman at Maidstone who was told I had gone to pray with a sick man. 'What!' said she, 'Mr. Vine Hall? Then I shall never despair of any one.'"

He still endeavored to be useful to others. Within a very few days of his death, he gave orders for various parcels of his little book to be sent for distribution to Christian friends whom he named. To his barber he said, "You'll not have to shave me much oftener. Here's a little book. I wrote it years ago. It has been blessed to thousands. I hope it will be blessed to you. Follow its directions. Seek Christ with your whole heart. I hope to meet you in heaven."

He sent affectionate messages to absent

members of the family, enjoining them to meet him above. To his son V. he sent word: "Tell him, that, while captain of the 'Great Eastern,' he must not forget that God placed him there. He must have Christ for *his* captain, and then he can smile at the storm." To his son S., at Hong Kong, who has been abroad upwards of thirty years, and has often expressed his intention of returning to England to see his parents once more: "Tell him how I love him, how glad I should have been to see him; but he must meet me in heaven."

Sept. 15. — He was evidently much weaker. I said, "You are not so well, dear father, to-day." He replied, "I wish the last were here." — "The promise of long life has been fulfilled." — "Yes, long ago." — "Your only plea is Jesus." — "Nothing else."

On Sunday morning, Sept. 16, I asked him if he had any message for the congregation. He replied, "Give my Christian love to them, and thank them for all their affection towards me."

After this, he almost entirely lost the power of speech; and it was very painful to witness his occasional but unavailing efforts to articulate. But, in the afternoon, he turned his eyes towards my mother and myself, as we were standing at the foot of the bed, and said, "God bless you both!" We felt it a patriarchal and a parting benediction.

In the evening, I placed a copy of the "Sinner's Friend" in his hands, and said, "You will no longer be able to hold up the gospel-flag. Will you commission me in your place, as a dying standard-bearer hands it over to his comrade?" He at once waved the book with all his little strength, and put it into my hand. I felt that I was "baptized for the dead."

The next day he continued to sink, and was unable to speak; though, by the expression of his countenance and the pressure of his hand, it was evident that he was quite conscious. On Tuesday morning, he looked affectionately towards his sorrowing wife, and

several times uttered her name with considerable distinctness, — "Mary, Mary, Mary!" A few hours after, having suffered considerably from difficulty of breathing, he again made a successful effort to speak, and said with great earnestness, "*Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!*"

It was very touching and very characteristic, this mention of the two names most dear to him, — expressive of his earthly and his heavenly love. For upwards of fifty years, his heart had been linked with that of his wife, with ties never surpassed in strength and tenderness. For upwards of forty years, the name of Jesus had been music to his soul. These two passions absorbed his whole being. He enjoyed all pleasures, performed all duties, loved all relations and friends, in connection with them. He had no aim, no affection, apart. No one was ever more domestic, no one ever more godly. Wordsworth's lines on a lark are applicable to him: —

"Type of the wise, who soar, but never roam;
True to the kindred points of heaven and home."

On Wednesday, after many hours' silence, when we thought he was no longer able to articulate, he suddenly began, in tones which could be heard in the other parts of the house, to invoke the name of the sinner's Friend. "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!" was many times repeated; the voice gradually sinking to a faint whisper. The words of a hymn he had often sung were illustrated: —

"I'll speak the honors of Thy name
With my last laboring breath;
When dying, clasp Thee in my arms, —
The antidote of death."

In the night, during a short interval of consciousness, his wife said, "Jesus is with us." He responded earnestly, "Always."

On Thursday morning, he seemed for several hours to be in the act of dying. The effort to breathe was very painful. He endeavored in vain to speak to us so that we could understand him. These words alone were distinguished: "Passing away, — pass-

ing away." Then, "Jesus, Jesus!" Then, "He is, he is!" I suggested, "He is here, — he is precious." He nodded assent, and we caught the word "Pray." We knelt round his bed in supplication that Jesus would speedily release his dear servant, and take him to join the great congregation of the saints made perfect. He earnestly responded, "Amen!" lifting up his hands, as if eager to be gone. Then, after putting his arm once more round my mother's neck, he gradually sank into a state of stupor; out of which, on Saturday morning, Sept. 22, at twenty minutes past five, he awoke into the immediate presence of the sinner's Friend.

What welcomes greeted him! — from many dear friends gone before, with whose hearts his own had beaten in warm response as they spake together of Jesus; from hundreds, perhaps thousands, of ransomed souls, who had been guided to heaven by his instrumentality; from the angels, to whom he had been the means of giving so much blissful work, in

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their "rejoicing over one sinner that repenteth;" above all, from Him whose name had so long been music to his ears, the thought of whom had so long ravished his heart.

Then did he verify the hymn he was so fond of, and which he often repeated with an enthusiasm which none can forget who ever witnessed it: —

"For ever to behold Him shine,
For evermore to call Him mine,
And see Him still before me;
For ever on his face to gaze,
And meet his full assembled rays,
While all the Father He displays
To all the saints in glory.

Not all things else are half so dear
As his delightful presence here:
What must it be in heaven!
'Tis heaven on earth to hear him say,
As now I journey day by day,
'Poor sinner, cast thy fears away:
Thy sins are all forgiven.'

But how will his celestial voice
Make my enraptured heart rejoice,
When I in glory hear Him;
When I before the heavenly gate
For everlasting entrance wait,
And Jesus, on his throne of state,
Invites me to come near him!—

'Come in, thou blessed! sit by me;
With my own life I ransomed thee:
Come, taste my perfect favor.
Come in, thou ransomed spirit! come;
Thou now must dwell with me at home:
Ye blissful mansions, make him room;
For he must stay for ever!'

When Jesus thus invites me in,
How will the heavenly host begin
To own their new relation!—
'Come in, come in!' the blissful sound
From every voice shall echo round,
While all the crystal walls resound
With joy for my salvation."

IS NOT THIS A BRAND PLUCKED OUT OF THE FIRE?

He had told his wife where to find a letter for her to read after his decease. It abounds in expressions of the most fervent love to herself. The following extracts I am permitted to make, in the hope that they may promote the great life-object of the deceased, — the good of immortal souls: —

"Grieve not, dearest, that your ever tenderly loved husband is taken from you, only to be *restored* in the Lord's time; but rather *rejoice* that his soul is relieved from its tenement of clay, to be for *ever* with the Lord, — yes, for *ever* with the *Lord*. I hope there may be no presumption in this assertion; nothing rash, irreverent, or bold; nothing unbecoming a poor, redeemed sinner, in whose heart the Lord Jesus has held occupation so many years, — ever a million million times WELCOME Guest, — always the *delight* of my life, the *joy* of my soul.

"Our blessed and merciful God will never leave you, never forsake you. We have *proved* and *experienced* his faithfulness.

"As my soul has long mourned over my sin with deep repentance, my God has forgiven it too; but I have never forgiven *myself*, nor have I ever ceased to feel the deepest sorrow. But,

God be praised, 'THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST CLEANSETH FROM ALL' — yes, even from *my* — sins, crimson as they are. And, oh! what special mercy that I have long been delivered from all fear as to the article of *death* or the *act* of dying! Whether my body expire in agony, or in peace and gentleness, I know the Lord will give me *dying* grace; and I wish to know no other will than *his*. I love him too warmly to distrust him a single moment.

"Aug. 24, 1858."

The following was the favorite hymn of the author of "The Sinner's Friend." In expressing his most earnest desire, it describes what, by divine grace, he actually became.

"Oh for a heart to praise my God;
A heart from sin set free;
A heart that's sprinkled with the blood
So freely shed for me!

A heart resigned, submissive, meek,—
My dear Redeemer's throne;
Where only Christ is heard to speak;
Where Jesus reigns alone.

A humble, lowly, contrite heart,
  Believing, true, and clean;
Which neither death nor life can part
  From Him that dwells within.

A heart in every thought renewed,
  And filled with love divine;
Perfect and right and pure and good, —
  A copy, Lord, of thine.

Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart;
  Come quickly from above:
Write thy new name upon my heart, —
  Thy new, best name of Love."

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